

News Release

For Immediate Release July 17, 2003

Women & Children's Hospital Unveils Variety Club Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

At a dedication ceremony today, officials from Kaleida Health and The Women & Children's Hospital thanked the entire Western New York Community for its generosity in funding the region's most advanced Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Named Variety Club Tent #7 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo, the NICU is a newly built extension of the third floor and sits atop the Alfiero Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

According to a donor wall unveiled today by the Children's Hospital of Buffalo Foundation, thirty-four separate entities – companies, organizations, individuals and volunteer fundraisers – contributed almost \$8 million to the privately funded project. The Variety Club of Buffalo, Tent #7, through its annual Telethon raised \$3 million of the total cost.

According to CHOB Foundation Chairman, Gerard Mazurkiewicz, "On behalf of our Foundation, I want to thank all the donors, and Variety Club, in particular, for their support of this regional treasure."

According to Michael Benevento, Assistant Chief Barker, Vice President of Variety Club, "The mission statement of the Variety Club of Buffalo states "We will always focus on our mission to serve the sick, handicapped and underprivileged children of Western New York, Northern Pennsylvania and Southern Ontario". "Children are the first priority of Variety Club". Today, as we have since 1934, the Variety Club of Buffalo is again showing that the children are our first priority. On behalf of the Officers, Board, Members of Variety Club, the Variety Club women and the tens of thousands of donors who help us carry out our mission thru their year round contributions, "Let this Variety Club Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit allow children to have a chance at the finest quality of life."

The Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo has long been designated by New York State as the Regional Perinatal Center for Western New York. As such, sixteen hospitals from the region's eight counties and three institutions in Erie and Warren, Pennsylvania transfer their most critically ill infants and high risk expectant mothers to the hospital for this highest of skilled medical care. The unit contains the most up to date medical technology used for neonatal patients, infants admitted at less than 28 days of age.

According to Kaleida Health President and Chief Executive Officer William D. McGuire, "To say that Western New York has been generous to The Women & Children's Hospital is quite an understatement. All segments and corners of this community, once again, came forward to support this hospital in our mission to care for the most critically ill infants. Thank you to the companies, organizations and individuals of Western New York."

Annually, the NICU cares for more than 700 infants, 230 of whom are transferred from hospitals within the regional perinatal network. With an

average daily census of 47 babies, and approximately 17,000 patient days per year, the new NICU will better accommodate our critically ill newborns.

The NICU staff is extremely comprehensive and includes physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, respiratory, occupational and physical therapists, neonatal transport teams, nutritionists, a psychologist, social workers and pharmacists. All staff are specially trained in the care of infants and children.

WCHOB offers its critically ill infants pediatric sub specialists in every aspect of pediatric medical care – neonatology, cardiology, dermatology, neurology, genetics, endocrinology, gastroenterology, hematology-oncology, immunology, infectious disease, pulmonary and rheumatology. WCHOB is the only hospital in the region to have pediatric surgical sub specialists for cardiothoracic surgery, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, otolaryngology, urology and general pediatric surgery.

According to WCHOB Chief of Neonatology Rita Ryan, MD, "This new facility means a great deal to our staff who work so hard to help these babies, day in and day out. It's a very exciting day for all of us and I am very grateful to those who made it a reality."

According to WCHOB President Stuart Williams, "This unit is all about helping families. We want to give them the best medical care in a setting that is as pleasant and comfortable as possible. That's now possible in our Variety Club Neonatal Intensive Care Unit."